

Appl. No. : 10/007,724
Filed : November 9, 2001

REMARKS

Claims 24, 25, and 28-31 are pending in this application. Claims 1-23, 26, 27, and 32-50 have been cancelled.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 32-34 and 36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. Although Applicant does not agree with the propriety of the rejection, Claims 32-34 and 36 have been cancelled without prejudice, solely to facilitate issuance of the claims indicated to be allowable. Applicant reserves the ability to pursue the cancelled claims, or similar claims, in one or more continuing patent applications. The rejection is therefore moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) - Dale et al.

Claims 1-13, 17, 32-34, 36, 38-39, 41, 43, and 45-48 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. 4,317,460 (hereinafter "Dale, et al."). Although Applicant does not agree with the propriety of the rejection, Claims 1-13, 17, 32-34, 36, 38-39, 41, 43, and 45-48 have been cancelled without prejudice, solely to facilitate issuance of the claims indicated to be allowable. Applicant reserves the ability to pursue the cancelled claims, or similar claims, in one or more continuing patent applications. The rejection is therefore moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) - Bryant et al.

Claims 1-21, 32-34, 36, 38-39, 41, 43, and 45-50 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by, or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over U.S. 4,235,251 (hereinafter "Bryant et al."). Although Applicant does not agree with the propriety of the rejection, Claims 1-21, 32-34, 36, 38-39, 41, 43, and 45-50 have been cancelled without prejudice, solely to facilitate issuance of the claims indicated to be allowable. Applicant reserves the ability to pursue the cancelled claims, or similar claims, in one or more continuing patent applications. The rejection is therefore moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) - Norman et al. in view of Dale et al.

Claims 1-21, 32-34, 36, 38-39, 41, 43, and 45-48 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over U.S. 4,216,784 (hereinafter "Norman et al.") in view of Dale et al. Although Applicant does not agree with the propriety of the rejection, Claims 1-21, 32-34, 36, 38-39, 41, 43, and 45-48 have been cancelled without prejudice, solely to facilitate issuance of the claims indicated to be allowable. Applicant reserves the ability to pursue the cancelled

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claims, or similar claims, in one or more continuing patent applications. The rejection is therefore moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) - Bryant et al. in view of Neukomm

Claims 22 and 23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Bryant et al. in view of U.S. 4,201,234 (hereinafter "Neukomm"). Although Applicant does not agree with the propriety of the rejection, Claims 22 and 23 have been cancelled without prejudice, solely to facilitate issuance of the claims indicated to be allowable. Applicant reserves the ability to pursue the cancelled claims, or similar claims, in one or more continuing patent applications. The rejection is therefore moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that Claims 24, 25, and 28-31 are allowed.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns that might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 3/18/04

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